

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Kayla Rhoades for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character to all her future accomplishments.

A TRIBUTE TO NICHOLAS H.
BURLAK

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 3, 2010

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I recently was informed by a group of citizens who live in my district of a remarkable story about one of their neighbors. I admire their spirit in making sure that the inspiring story of their friend and neighbor, Nicholas H. Burlak, is more widely known. And I ask that my remarks here be printed to call attention to Mr. Burlak's remarkable achievements, so that they may serve as an example to others.

Nicholas Burlak was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1924, and when the Depression came, his father moved the family to Ukraine in search of work. When World War II broke out in 1941, when the Hitler-Stalin pact fell apart and Germany then attacked its erstwhile ally, the Soviet Union, Nicholas Burlak tried to return to the United States, the home of his birth, to enlist in the Marine Corps. But this was physically impossible. He then did the next-best thing—determined to fight the Nazis, and to defend his country of birth as best he could, Mr. Burlak became an American volunteer in the Soviet Army. Subsequently he was wounded four times in battle, twice suffered shell shock and received several medals for bravery as he participated in the terrible battles between the Soviet and Nazi armies, ultimately fighting his way with other Russians to Berlin. Among the signatures left by Russian soldiers on the walls of the Reichstag in 1945 was one in English—"Bethlehem, PA, USA—Donbass, Ukraine, Aktyubinsk, Kazakhstan, Berlin, Germany May 1945—Nicholas." That was the heroic and patriotic American, Nicholas Burlak, who did not allow his separation from our country to prevent his allegiance to it.

With the sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of World War II, the Russian government awarded Mr. Burlak a medal. I believe it is appropriate for his fellow countrymen in the United States, now that he has returned to live among us as he always wanted to do, to join in commemorating the extraordinary dedication of this brave young man who has become a very valued member of our country today.

Madam Speaker, Nicholas Burlak's commitment to his fellow and sister citizens did not end with his joining in the war against the Nazis. In 2007, for example, he received the Eloise K. Houghton Award in recognition of community spirit and outstanding volunteer service from the Newton Community Development Foundation, a very important organization in my hometown, which provides help to others.

Madam Speaker, Nicholas Burlak understood how important his story was and how many people could learn from and be inspired by it, so he wrote a book—under the pseudonym of the time of M.J. Nicholas, entitled

"Love and War: An American Volunteer in the Soviet Red Army." It is not just an inspiring book, but a gripping one, and I welcome the chance, Madam Speaker, to mention it here, as part of the tribute that our country should be paying to Mr. Burlak. It is a tribute to him and to his neighbors that they are so inspired by his story that they took the initiative in writing to me and calling this to my attention, and I am very pleased to have the chance to express my admiration of Mr. Burlak and my appreciation to his neighbors for giving me the chance to do this.

KENDRA RODRIGUEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 3, 2010

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kendra Rodriguez who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kendra Rodriguez is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kendra Rodriguez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Kendra Rodriguez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character to all her future accomplishments.

COMMEMORATING THE FOUNDING
OF TURKEY'S FIRST JAZZ DE-
PARTMENT

HON. DONNA F. EDWARDS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 3, 2010

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the establishment of Turkey's first Jazz Department within Hacettepe University's prestigious Ankara State Conservatory. In the words of H. Res. 57 introduced by the Hon. JOHN CONYERS of Michigan during the 100th Congress, Jazz is "a unifying force, bridging cultural, religious, ethnic and age differences in our diverse society." This introduction of jazz education in Turkey further demonstrates the sweeping influence of this national treasure and its power to build bridges extending beyond our shores.

I am honored to have been in attendance, along with my colleagues the Hon. ED WHITFIELD of Kentucky and the Hon. JAMES P. MORAN of Virginia, at a gala reception on April 2, 2010 celebrating this department's inception. There could not have been a more fitting time to recognize the launch of the Ankara State Conservatory's Jazz Department than at the beginning of Jazz Appreciation Month. Without the insight and collaborative efforts of

Hacettepe University's American Studies Department, the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, and the Turkish Coalition of America this momentous occasion would not have become a reality.

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I am proud to have had the opportunity to witness first-hand another culture's deep appreciation for this over a century old African-American tradition. With its origins in the American south, Jazz is a musical genre that marks a confluence of African and European music traditions. Its melodic union of styles, sounds, and improvisation has inspired musicians around the world. At the gala reception held in Ankara on April 2, my colleagues Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. MORAN, and I were treated to a musical set by the Melis Sökmén Quartet. In addition to being a renowned Turkish jazz singer, Ms. Sökmén is the personification of her country's famed bridging of cultures. Born to a Guinean mother and Turkish father, Ms. Sökmén's pride in her roots beamed in particular during her jazz rendition of traditional West African lullaby "Malaika."

One cannot mention jazz without referring to the invaluable contributions of Atlantic Records founder Ahmet Ertegun. The son of a Turkish Ambassador father and a mother who filled their house with music, Ahmet and his brother Nesruhi became fans of blues and jazz at an early age while residing in Washington DC. The first ever integrated concert in Washington DC featuring jazz greats Duke Ellington and Lena Horne came about due to the efforts of the Ertegun brothers. Atlantic Records was established in 1947 and over the next several decades produced albums by jazz legends including John Coltrane, Charles Mingus, Dizzy Gillespie, and Wilbur de Paris. The Turkish fascination with jazz is attributable not only to the genius of the music itself but Ahmet Ertegun's success in helping it evolve into an internationally renowned art form.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating all parties involved in the development of the inaugural Jazz Department at Hacettepe University. Hacettepe University and the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs section have commenced a faculty exchange program in which jazz specialists from both countries will work and learn from one another. The joint effort of American and Turkish individuals and organizations in its establishment is a testament to over sixty years of enduring friendship between the United States and Turkey. Through shared appreciation of the arts these two great nations have formed yet another vital and resilient bond.

KSENIA BACHKINA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 3, 2010

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Ksenia Bachkina, who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Ksenia Bachkina is a 7th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Ksenia Bachkina is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and